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ABSTRACT

The reading objectives and measurement specifications in this paper are provided for teachers and other educators responsible for pupil instruction and for test development specialists involved with the preparation of the Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills. Following lists of objectives and general specifications, the paper outlines a description of test questions and answer choices, and provides an example of test questions for each of the ten objectives. These objectives are as follows: (1) use context to understand the meaning of words; (2) identify significant details; (3) identify the sequence of events; (4) identify the main idea; (5) distinguish between fact and opinion; (6) identify cause-and-effect relationships; (7) draw logical conclusions; (8) identify the parts of a book used to obtain information; (9) use graphic sources to get information; and (10) identify the appropriate source used to obtain information. (EL)

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Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills

Reading Objectives and Measurement Specifications 1986 Grade 7

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Foreword

The learning objectives contained in this volume are congruent with the *State Board of Education Rules for Curriculum* which outlines the rules and procedures for implementation of Section 21.101 of the Texas Education Agency Code. These objectives and the measurement specifications are provided for use by teachers and other educators responsible for pupil instruction and for test development specialists involved with the preparation of the Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS) test. Beginning with the 1985-86 school year, the TEAMS test will be based upon the objectives in this publication.

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Commissioner of Education

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Reading

List of Objectives

Grade 7

Objective 1: Use context to understand the meaning of words.
Objective 2: Identify significant details.
Objective 3: Identify the sequence of events.
Objective 4: Identify the main idea.
Objective 5: Distinguish between fact and opinion.
Objective 6: Identify cause-and-effect relationships.
Objective 7: Draw logical conclusions.
Objective 8: Identify the parts of a book used to obtain information.
Objective 9: Use graphic sources to get information.
Objective 10: Identify the appropriate source used to obtain information.

Grade 7 Reading

General Specifications

I. Reading Selections

A. Except where noted otherwise, the readability of the reading selections will be approximately 7.0 when assessed by the Harris-Jacobson Wide Range Readability Formula 2.

B. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) cumulative vocabulary list for Grade 7 shall be the source for words used in the selections. Proper nouns and words explained in a reading selection are excluded from this requirement.

C. Selections shall represent various ethnic groups of populations in Texas. The three main groups are black, Hispanic, and white.

D. The reading selections and items shall be free of stereotyping by age, sex, ethnicity, and geographical location.

E. Selections shall include narratives, fiction, and passages from the content areas.

F. Selections shall be untitled.

G. For Objectives 2-6, each reading selection shall be used as a stimulus for more than one item and as a measure of more than one objective. These reading selections will be of varying lengths, ranging from 125 to 350 words.

H. For Objective 7, each reading selection will serve as a stimulus for one item testing that objective. These selections will be of varying lengths, ranging from 60 to 100 words.

II. Test Items

A. For each item, there shall be four responses with only one correct response.

B. When items relate to selections, the correct response shall be dependent upon the selection.

C. Except where noted otherwise, the words in the items, including the answer choices, will be taken from the TEA cumulative vocabulary list for Grade 7. Proper nouns and words explained by a reading selection are excluded from this requirement.

D. Neither "none of the above" nor "all of the above" shall be used as an answer choice.

III. Test Package Format

A. The test shall be printed in black ink on white paper.

B. Reading selections or graphics and their corresponding test items will appear on the same or facing pages.

C. Type size will be appropriate for seventh grade students.

Grade 7 Reading

Objectives and Measurement Specifications

Objective 1
Use context to understand the meaning of words.

Description of Test Questions

1. The question will not be referenced to a reading selection.
2. A boxed sentence that contains an underlined word will be presented. The sentence will not exceed 16 words in length.
3. The underlined word shall be taken from the TEA cumulative vocabulary list for Grade 10.
4. The underlined word may have multiple meanings.
5. One or more context clues will be provided to allow students to select the appropriate meaning. Context clues may be of the following types:
   a. an example of a situation created by, resulting from, or equivalent to the referent of the underlined word; for example, "The soil was very dry because of the drought."
   b. a synonym for the underlined word; for example, "The author used a comparison, or simile, to describe the stormy weather."
   c. an antonym for the underlined word; for example, "Martha is usually happy, but today she seems despondent."
   d. a setting that limits the meaning of the underlined word; for example, "Cargo ships transport many of the products of Texas to other countries."

Description of Answer Choices

1. Each answer choice will fit grammatically into the sentence and will not exceed 12 words in length.
2. The correct answer will be a synonym for or a definition of the underlined word that is supported by the given context. A synonym used in the sentence as a context clue will not be used as the correct answer choice.
3. Incorrect answer choices will be:
   a. alternate definitions of the underlined word that are not supported by the given context
   b. incorrect definitions of the underlined word

Example of Test Questions

Read the sentence. Then choose the word or group of words that tells the meaning of the underlined word as it is used in the sentence.

> Firefighters helped in the evacuation of the people from the burning building.

A removal

B return

C destruction

D arrival

Objective 2
Identify significant details.

Description of Test Questions

1. An untitled reading selection that contains explicit details will be presented.
2. The details to be tested shall be stated explicitly within the selection. (Recall of insignificant facts shall not be required by the items.)
3. Inferences, outcomes, and conclusions will not be measured by this objective.
4. The test question will present a clear question that asks "who," "what," "which," "when," "where," "why," "how," "how many" or "how much" and refers to a detail given in the reading selection.

Description of Answer Choices

1. Each answer choice will be a word, phrase, clause or sentence directly restated from the selection.
2. The correct answer choice will be the detail from the selection that is asked for by the question.
3. Incorrect answer choices will be details from the selection that are inaccurate responses to the question.
4. No answer choice will exceed 12 words.

Example of Test Questions*

Read the following passage. Then answer the question.

All dogs living today are believed to be related to Tomarctus, a wolf-like type of animal that lived about 15 million years ago. This animal had a long, low body, a thick coat, and a wedge-shaped head.

Some of the early descendants of Tomarctus were wolves, foxes, and coyotes, which appeared about one million years ago. These wild dogs ran free until the Stone Age, when some were tamed by the people who lived then. These people discovered that wild dogs could be trained to track game.

Later, people learned that they could breed two different kinds of dogs to produce offspring with the best characteristics of both parents. From this crossbreeding, new kinds of dogs developed. For example, about 8,000 years ago, the Egyptians raised dogs that were used to hunt antelope. The Assyrians raised huge dogs called mastiffs that were trained to hunt lions. In the 1500's, the English raised bulldogs that were used in bullfights.

Today, there are more than 120 kinds of dogs that people keep as pets. These dogs are thought to be useful and affectionate friends by the many people who own them. Yet they are all believed to be related to the wild, wolf-like Tomarctus.

Which one of the following animals is related to Tomarctus?

A coyote

B antelope

C bull

D lion

* The example illustrates how the text of a selection may be used to measure the objective. The same selection and other items are used elsewhere and illustrate how the same selection can be used to measure several objectives.

Objective 3
Identify the sequence of events.

Description of Test Questions

1. A reading selection will be presented.
2. Each selection will include four to seven sequential events that are described in the order they occur.
3. The test question will ask students to identify the event described in the reading selection which is either:
   a. first
   b. last
   c. just before a specified event described in the reading selection
   d. just after a specified event described in the reading selection

Description of Answer Choices

1. All answer choices will refer to events described in the selection.
2. The correct answer choice will be the event asked for by the question.
3. Incorrect answer choices will be events described in the reading selection which are not asked for by the question.
4. No answer choice will exceed 12 words in length.

Example of Test Questions
Read the following passage. Then answer the question.

On the last day of school, the students in Mr. Calderon's class had a farewell party. The celebration took place during the last hour of the school day. Pastries, cookies, and punch that the students had brought were put on the tables and everyone helped themselves. Mr. Calderon surprised the entire class by serving a gigantic chocolate cake that he had created himself using his grandmother's recipe.

After the students and Mr. Calderon finished eating, they played some exciting games. The first game was called "Who's Missing?" To play this game, one student stands in the corner with eyes closed. The teacher then points to another student, who exits the room. The student who was in the corner attempts to guess who left the room. After playing "Who's Missing?," the students took turns making up riddles.

Finally it was time to clean up. All the refreshments were gone so there wasn't much to do. The paper plates, cups and napkins were picked up and then the tables were wiped. After that the trash was dumped into the big container near the cafeteria and the floor was swept. It was then time to go home, so all the students said good-by to each other and to Mr. Calderon. They all agreed that it had been an enjoyable party at the end of a productive school year.

What did the students do just after they made up riddles?

A They picked up the plates, cups, and napkins.

B They ate pastries, cookies, and cake.

C They said good-by to each other.

D They swept the floor.

Objective 4
Identify the main idea.

Description of Test Questions

1. A reading selection will be presented.
2. The selection will develop one main idea.
3. The main idea will be implied in the selection.
4. The main idea will be supported by topic sentences and/or details in the selection.

Description of Answer Choices

1. Four statements of possible main ideas will follow a reading selection.
2. The correct answer will be a paraphrase of the main idea of the selection that is both accurate and of the appropriate scope.
   a. A statement that is accurate contains information that is supported by the selection.
   b. A statement that is of the appropriate scope encompasses all of the most important details contained in the selection.
4. The incorrect answers will be either inaccurate or too narrow in scope.
   a. A statement is inaccurate if it is:
      (1) contradicted by information in the selection; that is, something stated in the selection makes this choice untrue
      (2) unsupported by information in the selection; that is, there is no information in the selection that can be used todetermine whether this answer is true or not
   b. A statement is too narrow in scope if it does not encompass all of the important details contained in the selection. This type of statement will refer to a supporting detail in the selection.
5. The three incorrect answers will include two statements that are inaccurate and one that is too narrow in scope.

Example of Test Questions*

Read the following passage. Then answer the question.

All dogs living today are believed to be related to Tomarctus, a wolf-like type of animal that lived about 15 million years ago. This animal had a long, low body, a thick coat, and a wedge-shaped head.

Some of the early descendants of Tomarctus were wolves, foxes, and coyotes, which appeared about one million years ago. These wild dogs ran free until the Stone Age, when some were tamed by the people who lived then. These people discovered that wild dogs could be trained to track game. Later, people learned that they could breed two different kinds of dogs to produce offspring with the best characteristics of both parents. From this crossbreeding, new kinds of dogs developed. For example, about 8,000 years ago, the Egyptians raised dogs that were used to hunt antelope. The Assyrians raised huge dogs called mastiffs that were trained to hunt lions. In the 1500's, the English raised bulldogs that were used in bullfights.

Today, there are more than 120 kinds of dogs that people keep as pets. These dogs are thought to be useful and affectionate friends by the many people who own them. Yet they are all believed to be related to the wild, wolf-like Tomarctus.

What is the main idea of the passage?

A Today's dogs are all descendants of Tomarctus.

B Tomarctus lived about 15 million years ago.

C The Egyptians and Assyrians were the first people to breed wild dogs.

D Dogs are affectionate and useful companions.

---

* The example illustrates how the text of a selection may be used to measure the objective. The same selection and other items are used elsewhere and illustrate how the same selection can be used to measure several objectives.

—7—

Objective 5
Distinguish between fact and opinion.

Description of Test Questions

1. A reading selection will be presented.
2. The selection will include at least one statement of fact and one statement of opinion.
3. Opinion statements must be made obvious by using clue words such as "think," "feel," and "believe," or words expressing an opinion, such as "pretty," "ugly," and "nice."
4. The test question will ask students to identify either a statement of fact or a statement of opinion that was presented in the selection.
5. The word "fact" or "opinion" will be underlined in the test question.

Description of Answer Choices

1. Each answer choice will be a single sentence related to the content of the reading selection.
2. Correct answers will be restated or paraphrased facts or opinions which have been presented in the reading selection and which are both accurate and relevant.
3. For test items requiring identification of a fact, incorrect answer choices will be of the following types:
   a. an inaccurate fact, that is, a statement presented as a fact, which is contradicted by information in the reading selection
   b. an irrelevant fact, that is, a statement presented as a fact, which introduces information not included in the reading selection (The statement must contain at least one concept from the selection.)
   c. an opinion containing at least one concept from the reading selection
4. For test items requiring identification of an opinion, incorrect answer choices will be of the following types:
   a. an inaccurate opinion, that is, a statement presented as an opinion, which is contradicted by information in the reading selection
   b. an irrelevant opinion, that is, a statement presented as an opinion, which introduces information not included in the selection (The statement must contain at least one concept from the selection.)
   c. a fact containing at least one concept from the selection

Example of Test Questions*

Read the following passage. Then answer the question.

All dogs living today are believed to be related to Tomarctus, a wolf-like type of animal that lived about 15 million years ago. This animal had a long, low body, a thick coat, and a wedge-shaped head.

Some of the early descendants of Tomarctus were wolves, foxes, and coyotes, which appeared about one million years ago. These wild dogs ran free until the Stone Age, when some were tamed by the people who lived then. These people discovered that wild dogs could be trained to track game.

Later, people learned that they could breed two different kinds of dogs to produce offspring with the best characteristics of both parents. From this crossbreeding, new kinds of dogs developed. For example, about 8,000 years ago, the Egyptians raised dogs that were used to hunt antelope. The Assyrians raised huge dogs called mastiffs that were trained to hunt lions. In the 1500's, the English raised bulldogs that were used in bullfights.

Today, there are more than 120 kinds of dogs that people keep as pets. These dogs are thought to be useful and affectionate friends by the many people who own them. Yet they are all believed to be related to the wild, wolf-like Tomarctus.

Which one of the following statements is a fact presented in the selection?

A Tomarctus had a long, low body, a thick coat, and a wedge-shaped head.

B Today's dogs are useful and affectionate companions to many people.

C The Egyptians raised bulldogs to participate in bullfights.

D Today, more than 120 breeds are recognized by the American Kennel Club.

* The example illustrates how the text of a selection may be used to measure the objective. The same selection and other items are used elsewhere and illustrate how the same selection can be used to measure several objectives.

Objective 6
Identify cause-and-effect relationships.

Description of Test Questions

1. A reading selection will be presented.
2. The cause-and-effect relationship to be tested shall be implied in the reading selection.
3. The cause-and-effect relationship to be tested will be supported by details in the selection.
4. The item stem will present a clear statement of either a cause or an effect stated in the selection.

Description of Answer Choices

1. Four statements of possible causes or effects will be given.
2. The correct answer choice will be either the cause or effect called for by the test question.
3. The incorrect answer choices will be causes or effects that are not supported in the selection.

Example of Test Questions*

Read the following passage. Then answer the question.

All dogs living today are believed to be related to Tomarctus, a wolf-like type of animal that lived about 15 million years ago. This animal had a long, low body, a thick coat, and a wedge-shaped head.

Some of the early descendants of Tomarctus were wolves, foxes, and coyotes, which appeared about one million years ago. These wild dogs ran free until the Stone Age, when some were tamed by the people who lived then. These people discovered that wild dogs could be trained to track game.

Later, people learned that they could breed two different kinds of dogs to produce offspring with the best characteristics of both parents. From this crossbreeding, new kinds of dogs developed. For example, about 8,000 years ago, the Egyptians raised dogs that were used to hunt antelope. The Assyrians raised huge dogs called mastiffs that were trained to hunt lions. In the 1500's, the English raised bulldogs that were used in bullfights.

Today, there are more than 120 kinds of dogs that people keep as pets. These dogs are thought to be useful and affectionate friends by the many people who own them. Yet they are all believed to be related to the wild, wolf-like Tomarctus.

There are many different kinds of dogs because

A people have crossbred different kinds of dogs

B people trained wild dogs to hunt other animals

C there have always been many different kinds of dogs

D wild dogs used to run free

* The example illustrates how the text of a selection may be used to measure the objective. The same selection and other items are used elsewhere and illustrate how the same selection can be used to measure several objectives.

–7–

Objective 7
Draw logical conclusions.

Description of Test Questions

1. A reading selection will be presented.
2. The test question will ask students to draw a conclusion.
3. The conclusion requested in the question will be supported by topic sentences and details given in the reading selection.
4. The conclusion shall be implied in the selection and may be a prediction of what will happen next.
5. Two items will ask students to draw a conclusion based on an entire selection.

Description of Answer Choices

1. Four statements of possible conclusions will follow a reading selection.
2. The correct answer will be a conclusion that is supported by the information given in the reading selection.
3. Incorrect answers will be responses that are not supported by information given in the selection.

Example of Test Questions
Read the following passage. Then answer the question.

> Learning to write in Chinese is very different from learning to write in English. There are no letters in Chinese writing; there are only symbols. Each symbol stands for one word in the language. In order to write "the man walked home," the Chinese must learn the symbols for "man," "walked," and "home." In all, there are more than 100,000 symbols in Chinese writing. To write in English, only 26 letters must be learned.
>
> Which of the following can be concluded from the passage?
>
> A Chinese writing takes more time to learn than English writing.
>
> B Most Chinese children do not learn how to write.
>
> C It is easy to learn to write in Chinese.
>
> D English is the simplest language to learn how to write.

—7—

Objective 8
Identify the parts of a book used to obtain information.

Description of Test Questions

1. The question will not be referenced to a reading selection.
2. The test question will ask students to identify which part of a book should be used to obtain specified information.
3. Five parts of a book will be tested: table of contents, index, glossary, preface, and copyright page.

Description of Answer Choices

1. Each answer choice will be one of the five book parts listed above.
2. The correct answer will be the part of a book appropriate for finding the specified information.
3. Incorrect answer choices will be the parts of a book inappropriate for finding the specified information.

Example of Test Questions
Read the question. Then mark your answer on your answer sheet.

Which part of your science book would you use to find out on what pages information about clouds is presented?

A index

B glossary

C preface

D copyright page

Objective 9
Use graphic sources to get information.

Description of Test Questions

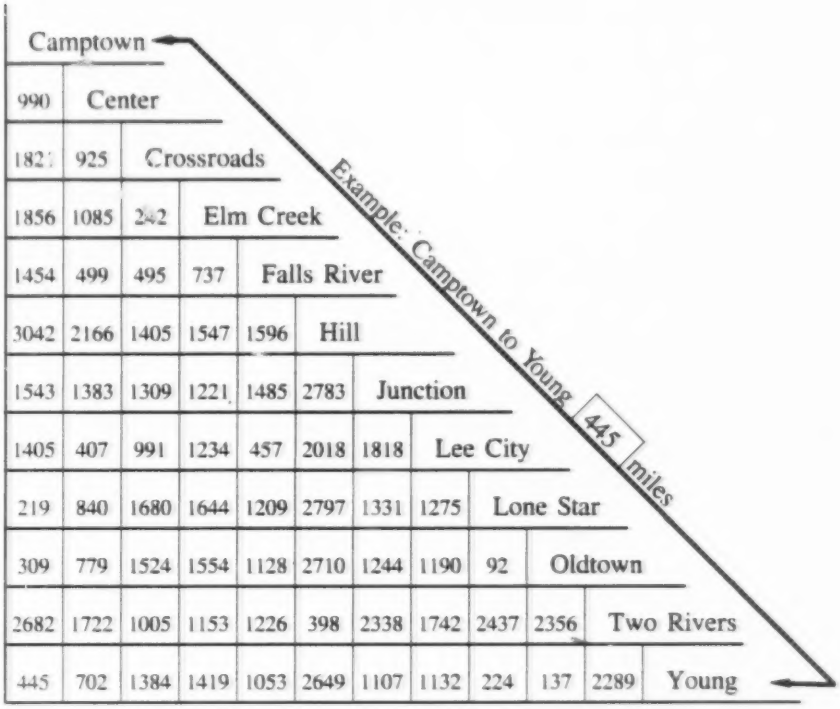
1. A graphic source will be presented. It will be a table, map, picture, diagram, schedule, scaled drawing or timeline.
2. Graphic sources shall have appropriate content for students in the seventh grade.
3. At least two different graphic sources of information will be tested.
4. At least two questions will accompany each source presented.
5. The information required by a question may be either given explicitly or implied by the graphic source.
6. No computation will be required.

Description of Answer Choices

1. Each answer will refer to the information given in the graphic source and will be appropriately labeled.
2. The correct answer will be the information from the graphic source that is asked for by the question.
3. Incorrect answers will be information from the graphic source and will be reasonable but inaccurate responses to the question.

Examples of Test Questions

Use the mileage chart to answer the questions below. Mark your answer on your answer sheet.



(a) How far is it from Crossroads to Two Rivers?

A 1005 miles

B 1384 miles

C 137 miles

D 1153 miles

(b) Which of the following towns is closest to Camptown?

A Lone Star

B Two Rivers

C Oldtown

D Lee City

—7—

Objective 10
Identify the appropriate source used to obtain information.

Description of Test Questions

1. The question will not be referenced to a reading selection.
2. The test question shall ask students to identify which reference source should be used to obtain specified information.
3. Five sources of information will be tested: dictionary, encyclopedia, atlas, newspaper, and telephone directory.

Description of Answer Choices

1. Each answer choice shall be one of the five reference sources listed above.
2. Atlas and encyclopedia shall not be used as answer choices in the same item when one of them is the correct answer.
3. The correct answer will be the appropriate source for finding the specified information.
4. The incorrect answer choices will be inappropriate sources for finding the specified information.

Example of Test Questions
Read the question, and mark your answer on your answer sheet.

Which reference source would give you the scores of last night's basketball games?

A newspaper

B dictionary

C telephone directory

D encyclopedia

COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

TITLE VI, CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964; THE MODIFIED COURT ORDER, CIVIL ACTION 5281, FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT, EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, TYLER DIVISION

Reviews of local education agencies pertaining to compliance with Title VI Civil Rights Act of 1964 and with specific requirements of the Modified Court Order, Civil Action No. 5281, Federal District Court, Eastern District of Texas, Tyler Division are conducted periodically by staff representatives of the Texas Education Agency. These reviews cover at least the following policies and practices:

(1) acceptance policies on student transfers from other school districts;

(2) operation of school bus routes or runs on a non-segregated basis;

(3) nondiscrimination in extracurricular activities and the use of school facilities;

(4) nondiscriminatory practices in the hiring, assigning, promoting, paying, demoting, reassigning, or dismissing of faculty and staff members who work with children;

(5) enrollment and assignment of students without discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin;

(6) nondiscriminatory practices relating to the use of a student's first language; and

(7) evidence of published procedures for hearing complaints and grievances.

In addition to conducting reviews, the Texas Education Agency staff representatives check complaints of discrimination made by a citizen or citizens residing in a school district where it is alleged discriminatory practices have occurred or are occurring.

Where a violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act is found, the findings are reported to the Office for Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

If there is a direct violation of the Court Order in Civil Action No. 5281 that cannot be cleared through negotiation, the sanctions required by the Court Order are applied.

TITLE VII, CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964; EXECUTIVE ORDERS 11246 AND 11375; TITLE IX, 1973 EDUCATION AMENDMENTS; REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 AS AMENDED; 1974 AMENDMENTS TO THE WAGE-HOUR LAW EXPANDING THE AGE DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT ACT OF 1967; AND VIETNAM ERA VETERANS READJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1972 AS AMENDED IN 1974.

It is the policy of the Texas Education Agency to comply fully with the nondiscrimination provisions of all federal and state laws and regulations by assuring that no person shall be excluded from consideration for recruitment, selection, appointment, training, promotion, retention, or any other personnel action, or be denied any benefits or participation in any programs or activities which it operates on the grounds of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, handicap, age, or veteran status (except where age, sex, or handicap constitute a bona fide occupational qualification necessary to proper and efficient administration). The Texas Education Agency makes positive efforts to employ and advance in employment all protected groups.

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